



Attorney General Jon Bruning

# NEWS RELEASE

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## **Bruning Calls on Congress to Restore Funding for Frontline Crime and Drug Enforcement Efforts**

**Note: A sound bite on this topic will be available shortly at: <http://www.ago.ne.gov>**

(Lincoln, Neb.) Attorney General Jon Bruning, along with 50 Attorneys General issued a letter calling on Congressional leaders to restore funding to the Edward Byrne Memorial Justice Assistance Grant Program.

Byrne funds are currently the only source of funding available to local and state law enforcement for multi-jurisdictional drug enforcement, including meth initiatives, and are a crucial source of funding for drug courts, law enforcement collaboration, gang prevention, and prisoner re-entry programs.

“Byrne funds are critical in our fight against drugs and violent crime,” said Bruning who is also president-elect of the National Association of Attorneys General. “If funding isn’t restored, we’ll see more criminals on our streets, more drugs in our neighborhoods and innocent people paying the price.”

The Attorneys General want fiscal year 2008 Byrne/JAG funds restored through supplemental appropriations, and adequate funding levels in fiscal years 2009 and 2010.

In fiscal year 2007, the Byrne program was funded at \$520 million. For 2008, the Senate had originally funded the Byrne program at \$660 million and the House at \$600 million in their respective appropriations bills. However, in the omnibus 2008 appropriations bill signed into law in December of 2007, Byrne program funding was cut to \$170 million for the coming year – a 67 percent decrease from 2007 funding levels. Nebraska received just over \$3 million in Byrne funding in 2007 and just over a million in 2008.

If Byrne/JAG funding is not restored, states will likely see widespread layoff of police and prosecutors. Programs proven to assist drug-addicted citizens in becoming productive members of society will be shut down.

Bruning, along with Rhode Island Attorney General Patrick Lynch, Colorado Attorney General John Suthers, Iowa Attorney General Tom Miller and Massachusetts Attorney General Martha Coakley spearheaded the effort to restore funding.

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